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PRESS RELEASE

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Seven More Defendants Indicted in Drug Conspiracy Case, Accused of Distributing Cocaine in Washington Area - Latest Developments in Probe That Led to Seizure of Nearly 30 Kilos of Cocaine -

WASHINGTON - Seven men were arrested today on federal charges stemming from an ongoing investigation into a drug trafficking organization that distributed large amounts of cocaine in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. All told, 11 people have now been charged in a case that earlier led to the seizure of nearly 30 kilograms of cocaine, weapons and cash.

The arrests, following the return of a superseding indictment by a grand jury in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, were announced by U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Four of those arrested appeared today in court and pled not guilty. They are: Sean De Angelo Crawford, 31, of Washington, D.C.; Shawn Anthony Lucas, 39, of Upper Marlboro, Md.; Roscoe Edd Minns, 32, of Laurel, Md., and Joseph Tolbert, III, 35, of Laurel, Md. All were ordered jailed without bond. The other men arrested today are due in court on June 22, 2011.

The arrests came as authorities executed seven search warrants today in the District of Columbia and Maryland. Several firearms, marijuana, crack cocaine, and \$25,000 in cash were seized during today's law enforcement activities.

Today's action comes nearly two months after authorities investigating this case searched a storage locker in Maryland and recovered 29.5 kilograms of cocaine, a Bushmaster AR-15 assault rifle, two semiautomatic pistols, and two bullet-resistant vests. The seizure of cocaine is one of the largest recent drug seizures in the area. The 29.5 kilos had an estimated wholesale value of \$1 million and an estimated street value of more than \$3 million.

Four men were arrested on the day of that search - April 26, 2011 - and named in the original indictment returned in this case. They are Gezo Edwards, 37, of Silver Spring, Md.; William M. Bowman, 31, of Bowie, Md.; Robert Carl Richards, 35, of Seat Pleasant, Md., and Willie Moorner, 37, of Washington, D.C. All have been in custody since their arrests.

Edwards, Bowman, Richards and Moorner had been indicted on a charge of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute cocaine. All had pled not guilty. The superseding indictment adds five new narcotics charges and three new weapons charges against Bowman. It also adds two new weapons charges against Edwards, Richards and Moorner. Edwards, Bowman, Richards and Moorner are to be arraigned on the new indictment on June 22, 2011.

The indictment also includes a forfeiture count – against all of those now charged in the investigation – seeking all proceeds from the crimes.

“Today’s takedown is further evidence of our effort to turn the tables on drug traffickers that endanger our community,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “We will be thorough, deliberate, and relentless in clearing our neighborhoods of narcotics, firearms, and the violence that they bring.”

“Trafficking organizations like the one alleged in this case threaten the safety and security of our neighborhoods,” said Assistant Director McJunkin. “The FBI, along with our local law enforcement partners, is focused on stopping the movement and sale of drugs on our streets and bringing those who profit from it to justice.”

“This was a major drug trafficking organization that was intent on pushing millions of dollars worth of drugs on the streets of the District of Columbia,” said Chief Lanier. “The impact would have been detrimental to our community, but this operation disrupted their criminal activities.”

The charges arose from a 15-month investigation by the FBI and MPD into people suspected of acting as wholesale distributors of cocaine in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The investigation determined that from January 2009 through April 2011, the defendants maintained a drug trafficking organization that supplied distribution amounts of cocaine, and crack cocaine to drug dealers in the District of Columbia and Maryland.

In April 2011, investigators learned that members of the organization had arranged for a large shipment of cocaine to the area, and that they were storing it in a storage facility in Hyattsville, Md. After obtaining a search warrant, agents searched the locker and recovered the 29.5 kilograms of cocaine, packaging material and firearms, including an assault rifle. In addition, searches of the residences of Edwards and Bowman resulted in the seizure of approximately \$600,000 in cash.

The prosecution grew out of the efforts of the federal Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force, a multi-agency team that conducts comprehensive, multi-level attacks on major drug trafficking and money laundering organizations. The principal mission of the nationwide

program is to identify, disrupt, and dismantle the most serious drug trafficking and money laundering organizations and those primarily responsible for the nation's drug supply.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal law and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

In announcing the new charges, U.S. Attorney Machen, Assistant Director McJunkin and Chief Lanier commended the work of the FBI and MPD members of the task force who investigated the case. They also thanked the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland, the FBI's Baltimore Division, and the Prince George's County and Montgomery County police departments, which provided assistance. Finally they cited the efforts of those who worked on the case from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, including Assistant U.S. Attorneys Debra Long-Doyle and Steven B. Wasserman.

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